

**AGENDA ITEM V E 3**

**PROGRESS REPORT ON CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PROGRAM**

**NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY**

**M. S. IN COMMUNITY/TECHNICAL COLLEGE MATHEMATICS  
(MCCM)**

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### PROGRESS REPORT ON CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PROGRAM

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#### M.S. IN COMMUNITY/TECHNICAL COLLEGE MATHEMATICS (MCCM)

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Board of Regents first approved the M.S. program in Community and Technical College Mathematics (MCCM) at Nicholls State University on a conditional basis in August 2003. Since then, the Regents have received four annual progress reports from the University updating efforts to address continuing concerns. Most recently in August 2007, the Board acted as follows:

**On motion of Regent Roy, seconded by Regent D'Aquin, the Board voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee to receive the AY 2006-2007 Progress Report from Nicholls State University Relative to Implementation of the M.S. Program in Community and Technical College Mathematics. By August 1, 2008, the University shall submit to the Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs a subsequent progress report addressing concerns expressed in the staff summary.**

At that time, the Staff noted:

*The primary problem facing this program is a lack of student numbers. This program can remain viable only as long as students' evidence expressed need and interest through enrollment and graduation. While the University has developed a recruitment strategy, it has yet to reach full fruition. Staff suggestions have been made which may enhance their efforts further. Given these circumstances, another progress report should be required for next year.*

#### STAFF ANALYSIS

##### 1. Student Enrollment

Number of enrollees and graduates (along with projections for these groups) for the past and upcoming academic years are provided below:

	Fall 2007	Spring 2008	Fall 2008	Spring 2009
Enrollment	18	22	22	22

Graduates	2	3	3	3
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\* Figures in *italics* are projections.

The University reports that the three (3) most recent graduates were actively pursuing positions in Mathematics at the postsecondary level – one received and accepted an offer of employment with Delgado Community College. Of the previous two (2) graduates during Fall 2007, one is an Instructor of Mathematics at Nicholls, and the other is pursuing a doctoral degree at LSU.

The large differential between number of students in the program and the number of graduates is probably due to a substantial part-time student contingency (thus explaining why the University has not been entirely successful at filling its allotted graduate assistantships for this program). Staff notes that enrollment projections (provided by the University) may be somewhat conservative. First of all, from Spring 2007 to Spring 2008, the University doubled its enrollment in the program, and secondly, the University's commendable, aggressive recruitment strategy is likely to produce more students. Graduation rates are an area of concern given that at the projected level they would not meet Board of Regents' productivity / viability standards.

Staff has suggested that the University nominate this program for inclusion in the Academic Common Market (ACM) in order to recruit and enroll out-of-state students (who would pay in-state tuition). Additionally, the University may want to explore its options at offering some of the required coursework via distance education. These recommended strategies could boost enrollment in the program (and subsequently graduation rates) thus ensuring its viability.

## **2. Graduate Student Support**

Staff notes that twelve (12) assistantships were allocated to this program during AY 2007-2008. Of these twelve positions, ten (10) were awarded and filled. Assistantships provide students with an \$11,000 stipend for the academic year (\$5,500 per semester) and a waiver of tuition. Staff encourages the University to buttress its efforts aimed at filling all available assistantships dedicated to this program. Should the number of assistantships increase and, as a result, the number of students attending full-time, then Staff anticipates that the projected number of graduates from the program will possibly increase as well.

## **3. Student Recruitment Efforts**

As evidenced by its latest progress report, the University continues to do a stellar job with regard to recruitment to and promotion of the program. These efforts are bound to produce further numbers of students albeit (surprisingly) the University projects no growth for the coming academic year and provided no rationale explaining such.

## **STAFF ANALYSIS**

The Staff commends the University for its efforts at maximizing program efficacy since 2003. As noted above, graduation rates are a major concern given that, at their current and projected

levels, they do not meet Regents' productivity standards. As such, monitoring of these numbers is warranted annually until the University is informed otherwise.

At present, the University funds twelve (12) graduate assistantships devoted solely to this program, though all are not awarded. As indicated above, should University efforts to fill this void be enhanced, the program could become more productive – full-time enrollments would possibly increase, as would graduation rates. Accordingly, the Staff feels that the continued monitoring via a progress report in one year of the annual awarding of graduate assistantships is also warranted. Additionally, the University should continue to report information to the Board with regard to placement of program graduates.

Given these circumstances, the Staff tenders the following recommendation:

### ***STAFF RECOMMENDATION***

***The Staff recommends that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee receive the AY 2007-2008 progress report from Nicholls State University relative to implementation of the M.S. program in Community/Technical College Mathematics. By August 1, 2009, the University shall submit to the Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs a progress report addressing the following:***

- 1) The number of program enrollees and graduates for AY 2008-2009 as well as projections for at least three years (this information should be submitted annually until otherwise notified);***
- 2) The number of graduate assistantships allocated to the program and awarded for AY 2008-2009; and***
- 3) Career information on the placement of program graduates.***